



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN OF TEWKSBURY

**TOWN HALL
1009 MAIN ST
TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01876**

**TODD R. JOHNSON, CHAIRMAN
SCOTT WILSON, VICE CHAIRMAN
BRUCE PANILAITIS, Ph.D., CLERK
DAVID H. GAY
JAMES D. WENTWORTH**

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MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 23, 2014

Chairperson Todd Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Present for the Board of Selectmen meeting were Bruce Panilaitis, Clerk and Board Members, David Gay and James Wentworth. Scott Wilson, Vice Chair was not present. Richard Montuori, Town Manager was also present.

Scheduled Items

Board of Selectmen's Priorities

Chairman Johnson opened the meeting outlining the overall goals of the working session. The idea was for members to bring forth their top three priorities over the next year. Working through those roughly 15 items, the Board can prioritize the top three goals. This would allow the Board to work in a unified fashion towards those goals, as well as avoiding overwhelming the Town Manager and his staff with multiple projects. In addition, the Chair suggested we should repeat these work sessions three to four times per year.

Mr. Gay began the discussion pointing out that his main priority is to work with all relevant parties to get Route 38 improved, including repaving, sidewalks, traffic improvements, etc. This will require assistance from our state delegation but is far overdue. All of the members agreed with this as a primary goal.

Mr. Panilaitis continued the focus on Route 38 suggesting that along with the physical improvements needed, a focus on the small businesses along Main Street is needed. He discussed the Rte 38 Business Proposal that he has been working on with the Town Manager, the Director of Community Development, and the Economic Development Committee.

Mr. Wentworth discussed the need for us to determine the type of community that we are and then outline a strategy around that vision. We need a vision for the long term nature of our community to appropriately market and grow both our commercial and municipal services.

Mr. Johnson discussed the need to improve the aesthetics of Route 38. This includes not only the physical improvements discussed by Mr. Gay, but also the types of signage, building type, landscaping, and other features that contribute to the "look" of the Town as presented by Main Street.

Mr. Johnson brought up the priorities that Mr. Wilson had forwarded via email as he wasn't able to attend. Mr. Wilson also focused on Route 38, in particular the need to continue the efforts of the Beautification Committee and other volunteers that have been trying to improve the aesthetics of Main Street.

The consensus of the members was to focus on the improvement of Route 38 as the Board's first priority.

After the discussions related to Route 38, a more free-form discussion of other potential improvements and issues occurred.

Topics included:

- Increased interaction with the other elected Boards and Committees to improve long term visioning for the Town.
- Initiation of a Citizens Academy as a means to increase the awareness of how Town government works, as well as provide training for those residents that might want to serve on various committees or other volunteer opportunities in Town. A combination of in-person meetings as well as online resources.
- Related to the Citizens Academy, but the initiation of a web-based resource through which residents can better understand what the various Town Departments do, and how to more efficiently interact with them as necessary.
- Initiation of an annual Town-wide survey to identify the most pressing issues of the residents and businesses.
- Explore the possibility of including an optional check box on real estate and excise tax bills to allow for resident-driven funding of an activities fund to allow funding of July 4th Fireworks, the Memorial Day Parade, the Tree Lighting, and other activities managed by the Events Committee, who would partner and work with the Friends of the Patriotic Activities Committee and other relevant non-profit organizations.
- Working with the Community Preservation Committee to allocate funds to leverage our natural resources (Long Pond, for instance) as well as working with volunteer organizations to achieve these goals.
- Explore the institution of a bylaw to require certain standards for properties within Town, particularly vacant or undeveloped properties.
- Working with the State Delegation to improve the Senior Citizens Sewer Abatement program.
- Improve the Town Meeting experience to include online-streaming and posting of the meeting as well as projectors and large screens for displaying presentations to the assembly.

MOTION: Mr. Gay made the motion for the Board to adjourn at 8:00 p.m.;
Mr. Panilaitis seconded, and the motion carried 4 to 0.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on September 9, 2014